

Upcoming Events

May 2021

Ramadan

April 12-May 12

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Better Hearing and Speech Month

Jewish American Heritage Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

Military Appreciation Month

Older Americans Month

Public Service Recognition Week

May 2-8

National Nurses Week

May 6-12

Military Spouse Appreciation Day

May 7

Mother's Day

May 9

Women's Health Week

May 9-15

Armed Forces Day

May 15

Memorial Day

May 31

ORMDI

Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion (ORMDI) toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TTY/TDD at 1-888-626-9008) and speak with a specialist regarding [Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Processing](#), [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#), and the [Harassment Prevention Program](#). You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office.



Commemorate

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

This May, VA joins the Nation in observing Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. During this time, "we celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage that have enriched our great country and helped define our history. These Americans bolster our economy as entrepreneurs, business owners, and employees who initiate and expand opportunities for their families, communities, and country. Their languages, art, cuisine, and other cultural elements have enriched the American experience, and many have fearlessly answered the call of duty to defend our freedom as members of our Armed Forces" ([2019 Presidential Proclamation](#)). [Continued on page 5](#).



PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

MAY 2-8, 2021

Message from the DAS

Harvey Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion

During Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW), VA celebrates and honors its public servants for their contributions to the Department. Dedicated and outstanding employees across the country make a difference every day by fulfilling VA's mission of caring for our Nation's Veterans and their families.

PSRW is an annual celebration held the first full week of May to honor the country's federal, state, county and local government employees for their contributions to public service. From May 2-8, 2021, VA facilities across the Nation will take part in virtual events that salute and enrich our workforce. You can look forward to inspiring roundtable chats, educational panel discussions and streaming activities that refresh your body, mind and spirit.



Monday, May 3, is Inspiration Day. As we kick off the week, let us remember the shared experiences that bind us together as a VA family. Employees are invited to join a roundtable discussion on Microsoft Teams at 12:30 p.m. ET and share what keeps them motivated and inspired during their day-to-day service to the Nation.

Tuesday, May 4, is Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Day. Our individual differences make us better together and position us to provide high quality benefits and services to the Veteran community. Our diversity is our strength! Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Day will feature a multimedia lunch and learn at 12:30 p.m. ET in Microsoft Teams that will educate employees at all levels what actions they can take to foster a healthy work environment.

Wednesday, May 5, is Wellness Day. Your health and wellness is not only vital for your personal quality of life, but it is also an important aspect of the level of service we provide to our Veterans. Invest time and effort in yourself. You're worth it! Wellness Day will include three distinct and separate opportunities for refreshment: yoga; Show What You Know, an educational event with VA trivia; and a stress relief tutorial. The yoga and stress management classes were pre-recorded and are available on the PSRW Celebration Hub so folks can take part and enjoy these when their schedules allow. Show What You Know is scheduled at 12:30 p.m. ET in Microsoft Teams.

Thursday, May 6, is Resilience Day. Today we reflect on incredible sacrifices made by public servants over the past year. You have remained resilient in the face of adversity. Your attitudes and performance during this pandemic should be commended! Reflections on Resilience is a 60-minute panel discussion at 12:30 p.m. ET in Microsoft Teams, covering two resilience-related topics – Overcoming Obstacles and Redefining "Veteran." Overcoming Obstacles allows panelists to share personal stories concerning how they have recovered from difficulties in life, encouraging others to do the same. Redefining "Veteran" will explore how we as VA employees can remain flexible and sensitive to the evolving Veteran culture to better understand the customers we serve, including women Veterans, Veterans under 40, and Veterans from the LGBT community.

Friday, May 7, is Gallery Day. The accumulated artwork submitted by VA employees will be on full display at a virtual gallery showing at 12:30 p.m. ET in Microsoft Teams. ORMDI collected photos, pieces of creative writing and digital depictions of paintings, drawings, sculptures or other works of art from employees during April 2021. Gallery Day will show off and spotlight these submissions, offering a handful of VArt Challenge participants time to talk about their entries.

Visit the VA PSRW Hub for a complete schedule and timeline of events. A [video summarizing this week's schedule](#) is also available. Finally, please view my [PSRW video message](#) and a [video message from Mr. James Anderson, Special Assistant and Deputy White House Liaison at the Department of Veterans Affairs](#). Thank you for your service!



PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Visit the [PSRW Celebration Hub](#) regularly for news on all events and activities.

Inspiration Day

Monday, May 3, 12:30 p.m. EST

As we kick off the week, let us remember the shared experiences that bind us together as a VA family.

What is Your One Thing? Employees are invited to join a roundtable discussion on Microsoft Teams to share what keeps them motivated and inspired during their day-to-day routines.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Day

Tuesday, May 4, 12:30 p.m. EST

Our individual differences make us better together and position us to provide high quality benefits and services to the Veteran community. Our diversity is our strength!

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace is a multimedia lunch and learn that will educate employees at all levels on actions they can take to foster a healthy work environment.

Wellness Day

Wednesday, May 5

Your health and wellness is not only vital for your personal quality of life, but it is also an important aspect of the level of service we provide to our Veterans. Invest time and effort in yourself. You're worth it!

Wellness Day includes three distinct and separate opportunities for refreshment: morning yoga, early afternoon VA trivia, and a late afternoon stress relief tutorial.

Resilience Day

Thursday, May 6, 12:30 p.m. EST

You remain resilient in the face of this pandemic. We admire your attitudes and performance!

Reflections on Resilience is a panel discussion on two resilience-related topics – Overcoming Obstacles and Redefining “Veteran.” The first allows panelists to share personal stories about bouncing back from life’s difficulties. The second will explore how VA employees can remain flexible and sensitive to our evolving Veteran population.



Training

FAPAC NLTP

The 36th Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) National Leadership Training Program (NLTP) will be held virtually May 25-27, 2021. The NLTP is a valuable developmental opportunity for all attendees. Each year, the NLTP gathers hundreds of government leaders from the Federal and District of Columbia governments representing various agencies and parts of the country. The NLTP is for three days filled with dynamic keynote sessions, panel discussions, and interactive problem-solving workgroups on topics to build government leadership skills. Costs associated with attending must be authorized by each employee's organization. No centralized funding is available to pay for registration or travel. Employees who plan to attend the FAPAC NLTP should follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. For additional information, contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA's National AAPI Employment Program Manager, Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion (ORMDI). Additional conference information including registration costs, course descriptions, and schedules is available on the [FAPAC website](#).

On May 26, 2021, FAPAC, in partnership with VA, is hosting workshops on Veterans benefits, services and employment. Veterans, Active Duty Personnel and their families are invited to attend. Attendees will have all-day access to the Exhibition Hall & Career Fair (noon to 5 p.m.), workshops and networking opportunities throughout the day. To register for this FREE event, visit the [FAPAC NLTP Veterans Program webpage](#).

Overview of the Harassment Prevention Program

ORMDI hosts "Overview of the Harassment Prevention Program (HPP)" the first Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11 a.m. and 2 to 3 p.m. (ET). Participants will recognize potential workplace challenges and unprofessional conduct; learn to deescalate situations before they become EEO complaints and/or harassment allegations; and discuss dos and don'ts for creating and maintaining a civil work environment. Register on the Talent Management System (TMS VA 4563938).

Harassment Prevention

Harassment Prevention training will be held May 12 and May 19. Training for Managers (TMS VA 4532883) is 11 a.m. to noon and training for Employees (TMS VA 4501045) is 1 to 2 p.m.

Conflict Management

The Conflict Management virtual course provides information on the nature of conflicts and how to manage it. It provides a basic understanding of conflict, the underlying causes of conflict, and how alternative dispute resolution (ADR) can be used to resolve disputes. The course emphasizes mediation as one of the most commonly used ADR processes to address workplace disputes. Conflict Management training (TMS VA 4562696) will be held June 16 and 23 from 11 a.m. to noon and 1 to 2 p.m.

ADR Awareness

The ADR Awareness course provides information on EEO laws, regulations, and theories of discrimination that govern the EEO complaint process. It provides a basic understanding of conflict, the underlying causes of conflict, and how ADR can be used to resolve disputes. The course emphasizes mediation as one of the most commonly used ADR processes to address workplace disputes. ADR Awareness training (TMS VA 4517625) will be held July 14 and 21 from 11 a.m. to noon and 1 to 2 p.m.

The Audacity to Fail

Podcast Focuses on Discovering Leadership Wisdom Through Experiences with Failures and Missteps

The [Audacity to Fail Podcast: misStepping Into Success](#) focuses on discovering leadership wisdom through experiences with failures and missteps. The podcasts dive into conversations and stories from leaders as they share that failure activates a growth mindset, is an important part of learning and motivation for improvement! For the April episode, Dr. Shari Dade interviews Marcus Butler, the Director of Logistics for the Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization. He is responsible for program oversight and executive leadership in the areas of Transportation Management, Facilities Management, Equipment Management, Analytical Reporting, and Logistics Operations and the accomplishment of the overall OEHRM mission. The Audacity to Fail Podcast Series is also available on the [Talent Management System](#).

COVID-19 Community Corps

Department of Health and Human Services Launches New Campaign

As part of the [Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Public Education Campaign](#), the agency announced the launch of the [COVID-19 Community Corps](#), which will play a significant role in the agency's community-driven initiative.

The COVID-19 Community Corps is a nationwide, grassroots network of local voices and trusted community leaders to encourage vaccinations, with more than 275 founding member organizations that have the collective ability to reach millions of people. This effort will mobilize health professionals, scientists, community organizations, faith leaders, businesses, rural stakeholders, civil rights organizations, sports leagues and athletes, and people from all walks of life to become leaders within their own communities to help get friends, family, and neighbors vaccinated.

You're invited to support the effort by joining the COVID-19 Community Corps. As a member, you'll receive timely, accurate information to share with your family, friends, and neighbors. By encouraging them to get vaccinated, you'll help protect them – and allow all of us to safely gather together again.

As a Corps member, you'll get resources to help you build vaccine confidence in your community, including:

- Fact sheets on vaccine safety, tips on how to talk with friends and family about the importance of vaccination, and hints for planning and attending community events;
- Social media content to share with your followers; and
- Regular email updates with the latest vaccine news and resources to share.

Commemorate

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AAPIs have served honorably in the United States Military since the War of 1812. The first AAPI to reach general officer rank was Brigadier General Albert Lyman (1885-1942), who was Hawaiian and Chinese American and the commanding general of the 32nd Army Division that fought in the Leyte campaigns in the Philippines in World War II. The highest ranked AAPI in the military was former VA Secretary Eric Shinseki, who was a four-star general and the Army Chief of Staff ([VA Center for Minority Veterans](#)).

As of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, AAPIs represent 5.29% of the Relevant Civilian Labor Force and 8.97% (37,732 employees) of VA employees. This is an increase of over 2,600 employees from the previous fiscal year. About 130,000 Veterans are employed by VA with AAPIs consisting of 4.20% of the Veteran employee population (5,417 employees).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, inflammatory and xenophobic rhetoric has put AAPI persons, families, communities, and businesses at risk. On January 26, 2021, President Biden signed a [Presidential Memorandum Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States](#) to advance the inclusion and belonging for people of all races, national origins, and ethnicities. This action is critical to guaranteeing the safety and security of the American people. VA's Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion (ORMDI) is coordinating the Department's response to the Presidential Memorandum.

Please join the Center for Minority Veterans and the VA Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Chapter on May 6, 2021, from 2:00 to 3:00 pm (ET) as VA commemorates AAPI Heritage Month. VA Secretary Denis McDonough will provide opening remarks and the keynote speaker will be Congressman Kaiuli'i Kahele, United States House of Representatives. In addition, there will be a live cooking demonstration. For more information about this event or to request an accommodation, contact [Ms. Bridget Souza](#), VA FAPAC Chapter President. For more information on VA's AAPI Special Emphasis Program (SEP), visit the [AAPI SEP webpage](#) or contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA's Departmental AAPI SEP Manager, ORMDI.



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